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from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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FRICK ANNOUNCES THE APPOINTMENT OF ITS FIRST DECORATIVE ARTS CURATOR, CHARLOTTE VIGNON



Charlotte Vignon, Associate Curator of Decorative Arts, The Frick Collection; Photo: Michael Bodycomb

The Frick Collection announces the appointment of **Charlotte Vignon** to the first curatorship dedicated to the museum's impressive decorative arts collection. Vignon takes up the newly created post of Associate Curator of Decorative Arts in October 2009, a development that sets the stage for a deeper understanding of and focus on the institution's holdings in this area. Comments Director **Anne L. Poulet**, "It has long been our desire to make our decorative arts holdings better known through improved displays, temporary exhibitions, publications, and educational programs. We were able to endow this position with the assistance of a generous challenge grant offered in 2007 by the National Endowment for the Humanities that has been matched three to one by a group of individuals and foundations. It is a pleasure to welcome Charlotte Vignon to this new post."

Adds Associate Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator

Colin B. Bailey, "This is an extremely exciting moment for the

Frick, as the addition of this significant position, which followed a competitive, international search, will allow us to interpret and present our collections more fully. Vignon brings a depth of knowledge of the decorative arts that is combined with a keen interest in American collectors, among them Henry Clay

Frick and J. P. Morgan, as well as the dealer Joseph Duveen—a topic that is compelling in its own right and particularly so at the Frick. The post also represents a new collaboration with New York’s Bard Graduate Center, where Vignon will teach an annual seminar on the decorative arts, one of many ways in which this new curatorship is designed to contribute to the academic community.”

A native of France, where she received her education and spent several fruitful years early in her career working as a researcher in the field of European decorative arts, Vignon comes to the position having also held three highly regarded fellowships at American museums, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cleveland Museum of Art, and currently, The Frick Collection, where she is an Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow. In Cleveland, she held Andrew W. Mellon and Peter Krueger Christie Fellowships, and she worked on the first catalogue of that museum’s eighteenth-century decorative arts collection under the direction of Curator Henry Hawley. Her research resulted in the discovery of significant information about the provenance of objects and, in several cases, new identification and attributions. Vignon’s involvement in the activities of the department deepened over the course of four years, especially with Hawley’s retirement. Holding an Annette Kade Fellowship at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, she worked with curator Danielle Kisluk-Grosheide on a variety of projects, contributed to acquisition reports, and was engaged in research on the permanent collection, also resulting in new identifications. For The Frick Collection, Vignon is currently developing a fall 2009 exhibition, ***Exuberant Grotesques: Renaissance Maiolica from the Fontana Workshop***, for which she is also writing the catalogue. This project focuses on an important recent gift to the institution and follows the model of other critically acclaimed Cabinet presentations by examining an object in the context of important related works of art. She has also been working closely with Conservator Joseph Godla to present seminars on aspects of the Frick’s furniture collection and, while at all three museums, has frequently lectured and written articles on topics in the decorative arts and collecting. This fall, she will complete her Ph.D. dissertation for the Sorbonne, Paris, on the dealings of the Duveen Brothers in European decorative arts and Chinese porcelains between 1880 and 1940. This is a topic of great relevance to the museum, as many of Henry Clay Frick’s purchases came through Duveen’s firm. The subject also relates to the focus of interest at the Frick’s recently established Center for the History of Collecting in America, based at its Art Reference Library.

Comments Vignon, “It is a privilege to join the Frick staff in this important new role, undoubtedly an opportunity of great possibilities. Today, the Frick is known for its Old Master paintings and sculpture, and I look forward to expanding the public’s understanding and appreciation of its superb collection of

decorative arts through exhibitions and education programs. At the same time, I hope to bring the Frick into the forefront of scholarly research in the field through ground-breaking publications and creative courses at the Bard Graduate Center.”

The establishment of an endowment for this position was made possible by a challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, with major funding from The Iris Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Additional generous support was provided by The Arnhold Foundation, John and Constance Birkelund, The Florence Gould Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen A. Schwarzman, Edward Lee Cave, Michel A. David-Weill, The David Berg Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Jeremiah M. Bogert, Mr. and Mrs. Franklin W. Hobbs, and Melvin R. Seiden and Janine Luke.

About The Frick Collection

Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919), the coke and steel industrialist, philanthropist, and art collector, left his New York residence and his remarkable collection of Western paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts to the public “for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a gallery of art, [and] of encouraging and developing the study of fine arts and of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects.” Designed and built for Mr. Frick in 1913 and 1914 by Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings, the mansion provides a grand domestic setting reminiscent of the noble houses of Europe for the masterworks from the Renaissance through the nineteenth century that it contains. Fine artists represented include Antico, Bellini, Constable, Corot, Fragonard, Gainsborough, Goya, El Greco, Holbein, Houdon, Ingres, Manet, Monet, Rembrandt, Renoir, Riccio, Titian, Turner, Velázquez, Vermeer, and Whistler.

DECORATIVE ARTS HOLDINGS

While its collection of paintings and sculpture is among the best in the world, the Frick is equally renowned for a decorative arts collection that is unmatched in quality for its size. It includes the finest examples of Limoges enamels, Chinese and French porcelains, French eighteenth-century furniture by artists including André-Charles Boulle, Jean-Henri Riesener, and Martin Carlin, and seventeenth- and eighteenth-century clocks and watches. In recent years, many of these objects have been featured in the museum’s critically acclaimed special exhibitions program. Projects have included a major exhibition of clocks and watches, the renovation of the Enamels Room to better present a range of Renaissance decorative arts, the examination of an exceedingly rare eighteenth-century mechanical table, the conservation and display of important Mughal carpets, a Cabinet presentation on a pair of important

Chinese vases, and, most recently, a comprehensive exhibition on an important private collection of early Meissen porcelain.

ABOUT THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY

The Frick also operates the Frick Art Reference Library, founded by Henry Clay Frick's daughter, Miss Helen Clay Frick, and serving the international art world for more than eighty years. Both a research library and a photo archive, the Frick Art Reference Library is one of the world's great repositories of documents for the study of Western art. In 2006, plans were announced to establish a Center for the History of Collecting in America, to be located at the Frick Art Reference Library's building at 10 East 71st Street. Today, it is a thriving initiative involving seminars and a host of other activities and offerings.

BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: (212) 288-0700

Web site: www.frick.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

Where: 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue.

Hours: open six days a week: 10am to 6pm on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11am to 5pm on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11am to 5pm) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day.

Admission: \$18; senior citizens \$12; students \$5; "pay as you wish" on Sundays from 11am to 1pm.

PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection.
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Subway: #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station; **Bus:** M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

Tour Information: included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

Museum Shop: the shop is open the same days as the Museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

Group Visits: Please call (212) 288-0700 for details and to make reservations.

Public Programs: A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Manager of Media Relations & Marketing, or Alexis Light, Media Relations & Marketing Coordinator

Media Relations Phone: (212) 547-6844

General Phone: (212) 288-0700

Fax: (212) 628-4417

E-mail address: mediarelations@frick.org